

Someewhere in Italy

Jan 6, 1944
Thurs.

Bryant Service Club:

Have just received your letter which, you may be sure, was very welcome. Very interesting news, especially that about the missing boys; particularly Aguiar whom I remember very well, although it seems so long ago.

It must have been a rather perplexing situation on opening day, finding oneself so greatly outnumbered, though, should have its merits.

Out here, things move along in the same routine. Occasionally air raids and such do disturb us, but that's only one of the many things to put up with.

Recently the weather has turned to the cold, even some

snow to remind us of back home. Rain was our constant "friend" for quite a while, but now things are drying up very fast.

An interesting fact, here, is the way the women work. While the boys of the house (men) sit beside the fire, the woman does all the heavy work. They carry the wood, build fires, mix cement and carry it. They carry everything balanced on their heads; it's very common to see them prancing about with 50 to 100 lbs. on their heads.

As for their dress, the people wear varied costumes. Thick wool socks and the inevitable sandal which is prominent throughout the country. Just a shoe

carved out of a log to fit the foot, then to this they add a couple straps to hold them on.

The whole country might be called very primitive, for tool and working instruments everything date back to about the 17th century; at least it seems so to us.

The larger cities are much more modern in every way. In Naples, where I had the opportunity to visit, they even run to soda fountains. Being all these ancient places really is interesting. Things that seemed so remote -- Vesuvius, Pompeii etc; -- just like entering another world very removed from our normal existence.

The holidays were rather

quietly celebrated. Naturally, all the result of available, or rather the lack of available material. To produce a more noisy atmosphere. The New Year was welcomed in with a distinct bang, the roar of 155's. Very fitting end to a progressive year.

Your package has not as yet been received, but you may be sure that it will be accorded a very hearty welcome, as well as the many thanks for all you and the Service Club are doing for all the boys.

For myself, everything is as well as could be expected. Enjoyed a week's stay at the hospital, (influenza) I say enjoyed because that was about the first opportunity we

had of talking to an American girl
 once more. Since then, though we
 have been getting "good" donuts from
 Red Cross girls, and in that way,
 we manage to keep some sort of
 contact with civilization.

This chatter must stop with
 the waning light, so, with many
 thanks for your letter and a not too
 late repetition of same, I'll sign off.

Sincerely

Bert Hironaka

P.S. Keep up the good work. Those letters are
 great!

P.P.S. Am enclosing a few Italian coins for anyone
 who is interested.